

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0530**

HENRY A. WAXMAN  
30TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

December 16, 2009

Secretary Ray LaHood  
Department of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing to ask your support for the inclusion of New Starts funding in the President's Fiscal Year 2011 budget to support preliminary engineering and design of the Westside Extension subway and the Regional Connector light rail projects being undertaken by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA).


As you may know, in November 2008, Los Angeles County voters approved a referendum to raise a projected \$40 billion in local sales tax revenue over the next 30 years for major transportation infrastructure investment. A cornerstone of that initiative, which is now codified in the MTA's fiscally constrained Long Range Transportation Plan, is the extension of the Westside subway along Wilshire Boulevard to Westwood, and eventually beyond, and a Regional Connector Project to interconnect the MTA's three major transit lines.

With the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review for these two projects already under way, the MTA plans to select a locally preferred alternative and request approval from the Federal Transit Administration to enter preliminary engineering for both projects in the coming year. A commitment of funds in the President's budget will move these projects forward and dramatically expand access to some of the region's most concentrated job centers and densest residential areas.

The MTA has already written to the Department of Transportation requesting \$77 million in the President's budget to aid in the completion of preliminary engineering and design for these projects. I strongly support this request and urge you to act. In the absence of a new surface transportation reauthorization bill, Los Angeles is one of the only major metropolitan areas without a place in the New Starts program. Moreover, by providing funds in the budget to enable MTA to continue moving ahead, the Administration will be able to further its goals of immediate job creation and vehicular emissions reduction. Thank you for your consideration.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

  
HENRY A. WAXMAN  
Member of Congress